AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

In accordance with 37 C.F.R. §1.121(c), please amend the claims as indicated in marked-up form below, where additions are underlined, deletions are struck through, and new claims are presented without markings.

1-31. (Canceled)

32. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:

receiving a packet at one dispatcher of a plurality of dispatchers, the plurality of dispatchers coupled with a plurality of servers;

searching a local dispatch table of said one dispatcher;

transmitting the packet from said one dispatcher to a server of the plurality of servers if the local dispatch table identifies the server; and

transmitting the packet from said one dispatcher to a locking dispatcher of the plurality of dispatchers if the local dispatch table includes a client lock, the client lock indicating that communications received from a client are to be transmitted to the locking dispatcher until a server is selected for the ~~client.~~ client,

wherein:

the client lock is placed in the local dispatch table by said one dispatcher when said one dispatcher determines that there exists no session entry corresponding to the packet and determines that the client lock does not already exist.

33. (Original) The method of claim 32, wherein the local dispatch table includes the client lock, the method further comprising:

selecting a server from the plurality of servers; and

transmitting the packet from the locking dispatcher to the selected server.

34. (Original) The method of claim 33, further comprising broadcasting a dispatch table update from the locking dispatcher to all other dispatchers of the plurality of dispatchers, the dispatch table update identifying the selected server and indicating removal of the client lock.

35. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:

receiving a first packet at one dispatcher of a plurality of dispatchers, the first packet including a connection request from a client;

searching for a session entry corresponding to the first packet;

if the session entry is not found, creating a client lock on packets received from the client and placing the client lock in a local dispatch table corresponding to said one dispatcher, the client lock indicating that packets received from the client are to be transmitted to said one dispatcher until a server is selected for the client; and

broadcasting a dispatch table update from said one dispatcher to all other dispatchers of the plurality of dispatchers, the dispatch table update indicating the client lock. lock; and

receiving at least a second packet at another dispatcher of the plurality of dispatchers; and

transmitting the second packet from said another dispatcher to said one dispatcher.

36. (Canceled)

37. (Original) The method of claim 36, further comprising:

selecting a server from a plurality of servers coupled with the plurality of dispatchers; and

transmitting the first packet and the second packet to the selected server.

38. (Original) The method of claim 37, further comprising broadcasting another dispatch table update from said one dispatcher to said all other dispatchers, said another dispatch table update identifying the selected server and indicating removal of the client lock.

39-64. (Canceled)

65. (Currently Amended) A article An article of manufacture comprising:

a machine accessible medium, the machine accessible medium providing instructions that, when executed by a machine, cause the machine to machine to:

receive a packet at one dispatcher of a plurality of dispatchers, the plurality of dispatchers coupled with a plurality of servers;

search a local dispatch table of said one dispatcher;

transmit the packet from said one dispatcher to a server of the plurality of servers if the local dispatch table identifies the server; and

transmit the packet from said one dispatcher to a locking dispatcher of the plurality of dispatchers if the local dispatch table includes a client lock, the client lock indicating that communications received from a client are to be transmitted to the locking dispatcher until a server is selected for the client,

wherein:

the client lock is placed in the local dispatch table by said one dispatcher when said one dispatcher determines that there exists no session entry corresponding to the packet and determines that the client lock does not already exist.

66. (Original) The article of manufacture of claim 65, the local dispatch table including the client lock, wherein the instructions, when executed, further cause the machine to:

select a server from the plurality of servers; and

transmit the packet from the locking dispatcher to the selected server.

67. (Original) The article of manufacture of claim 66, wherein the instructions, when executed, further cause the machine to broadcast a dispatch table update from the locking dispatcher to all other dispatchers of the plurality of dispatchers, the dispatch table update identifying the selected server and indicating removal of the client lock.

68. (Currently Amended) A article An article of manufacture comprising:

a machine accessible medium, the machine accessible medium providing instructions that, when executed by a machine, cause the machine to machine to:

receive a first packet at one dispatcher of a plurality of dispatchers, the first packet including a connection request from a client;

search for a session entry corresponding to the first packet;

if the session entry is not found, create a client lock on packets received from the client and placing the client lock in a local dispatch table corresponding to said one

dispatcher, the client lock indicating that packets received from the client are to be transmitted to said one dispatcher until a server is selected for the client; ~~and~~

broadcast a dispatch table update from said one dispatcher to all other dispatchers of the plurality of dispatchers, the dispatch table update indicating the client ~~lock.~~ lock; and

receive at least a second packet at another dispatcher of the plurality of dispatchers; and

transmit the second packet from said another dispatcher to said one dispatcher.

69. (Canceled)

70. (Original) The article of manufacture of claim 69, wherein the instructions, when executed, further cause the machine to:

select a server from a plurality of servers coupled with the plurality of dispatchers; and

transmit the first packet and the second packet to the selected server.

71. (Original) The article of manufacture of claim 70, wherein the instructions, when executed, further cause the machine to broadcast another dispatch table update from said one dispatcher to said all other dispatchers, said another dispatch table update identifying the selected server and indicating removal of the client lock.

72-78. (Canceled)